

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The above-captioned patent application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action to which the Amendments are responsive. Claims 1-18 are pending. An amendment has been made to claim 13 to address the informality cited by the examiner in the Office Action by striking the claim term lacking a proper antecedent basis. Additionally, claim 6 has been amended to depend from claim 5 rather than claim 1 so as not to be duplicative of claim 4. As these amendments were made to overcome mere informalities and were not directed to a rejection based upon prior art, it is respectfully submitted that they are not made for purposes related to the patentability of the claims.

Claims 1, 3-4, 6-10, 12, 14-15 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,767,248 ("Hung"). Claims 2, 11, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hung in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,805,584 ("Chen"). Claims 5, 13, 17 and 18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hung in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,059,139 ("Spinner").

With respect to the rejections, Hung was cited by the Examiner as at least the primary reference in rejecting all pending claims. However, Hung was filed on and therefore has an effective date of November 9, 2003. Submitted with this Amendment and Response is a Declaration of Prior Invention executed by all inventors of the subject application swearing behind this reference with a date of invention at least as early as October 1, 2003, which is a date earlier than the effective date of the reference. The Declaration is supported by attached drawings and screen print outs of the electronic model of the various embodiments disclosed in the subject application which predate the effective date of the reference. Therefore, the rejections of each of the claims is respectfully traversed.

In summary, Applicant submits that the pending claims, as amended, are now in an allowable condition and such allowance is earnestly solicited.


Serial No.: 10/781,376
Amendment Dated: August 24, 2005
Reply to Office Action of June 1, 2005

Atty. Docket No.: 205_097
Express Mail Label No. EV554214201US

If the Examiner wishes to expedite disposition of the above-captioned patent application, he is invited to contact Applicant's representative at the telephone number below.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees associated with this communication or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 50-0289.

Respectfully submitted,
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Elastomeric Ring CATV Connector

This connector draws on technology which has been used in the premise wiring and automation wiring industries for years, but which has yet to be successfully implemented in connectors for cable television. It is most commonly found in strain reliefs for cables entering junction boxes and other types of sealed enclosures.

The basic principal of operation is to encircle the cable with an elastomeric material. In its "open" position, the ring has enough clearance to allow the cable to pass through it easily. By axial compression, tightening of threaded bodies, or by some other means of applying compressive force to the elastomer, the ring is squeezed inward on the cable. This creates a weather seal, as well as a great deal of normal force between the elastomer and the sheathing of the cable, which provides retention force. In addition to the tractive forces created by surface friction, the coaction of a barbed post under the cable sheathing, and the inward pressure of the elastomer, causes the cable sheath to conform closely to the profile of the barb, creating a mechanical interlock.

This type of connector is more easily capable of accommodating the broad range of cable diameters within a given cable family because of the flowable nature of the elastomer compression element. It conforms to surface irregularities in the cable, as well as being "sticky" which makes a better seal. Varieties of the connector could include tool-compressed, standard compression styles, as well as ones which can be tightened by hand for indoor consumer use. Another possibility is to include the elastomer sealing element in a modification of an existing design, as a redundant means of sealing.

Because the sealing and gripping are done by a small, contained element of the connector, the exterior of the connector can be made from whatever material suits a particular application. For instance, for outdoor applications the entire exterior can be brass. The all-metal exterior of the connector may or may not offer improved weather resistance or better RF shielding, but the prevailing customer perception is that it is better, and so becomes a highly marketable sales feature. A hand tightenable, all-plastic version with only a metal post could be easily injection molded for the indoor consumer market.